THEOLOGY

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The Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.

WHATEVER doubtful or disputable statements I am about to make, I can without fear of contradiction assert that the title of this Church is cumbrous. It is a title to which other objections also can be and are raised. But it is difficult, things being what they are, to propose an acceptable alternative, and I did not hear of one. The title is then likely to continue in use for some time. I do not know how to account for the absence of a familiar abbreviation of it. The Americans have reduced the practice of referring to their institutions by occult groups of letters to so crude an art that it seems curious that they speak of the P.E.C. or of PECUSA much less frequently than in England we use the abbreviation C. of E. for the Church of England. It will, however, be convenient if I may use one of these abbreviations here.

This article does not purport to be a report on the present condition of the P.E.C., based on a comprehensive survey of the facts. It is a piece of rank ecclesiastical journalism. I shall simply record some observations and reflections that are the result of my tour in the U.S.A. I shall be prepared for my American friends to tell me that some at least of my observations are superficial and of my reflections rash. Both anyhow are subject to the limitations on which I insisted in the article that I reproduced last month and which therefore I need not repeat. I cannot say that the principal observations in that article were not intended to apply to the P.E.C., since they were the outcome of experience acquired chiefly within its frontiers and by a critic who was being entertained not altogether unawares. While those observations are here presupposed, I can thankfully add that I found much more comprehension of the questions I asked under the heading "Sect versus Church" among Episcopalians than among other American Christians.

A visitor from the C. of E. finds himself much more at home in the P.E.C. than ought to be the case. The extraordinary hospitableness of his hosts heightens the impression, but, quite apart from that, it is remarkable to find an institution so much like the C. of E. in the U.S.A. I remember attending evensong in the General Theological Seminary in New York City soon after I had disembarked, and reflecting how pleasant but how odd it was to find something so familiar in that incredibly strange and cosmopolitan city. But was it right that an Englishman should find himself so much at home? The force of this misgiving will not be felt by any who retain the illusion that the U.S.A. is an Anglo-Saxon country. It is only when you realize of what an astonishing variety of races and nationalities America is made up that a Church as predominantly, if not as purely, Anglo-Saxon as the P.E.C. will strike you as incongruous, that is, if the Church aspires to be, as I

presume it must aspire to be, the Church of the whole American people. This Anglo-Saxon flavour of the P.E.C., which is most evident in but by no means confined to the Eastern States, is recognized as a serious handicap by discerning members of the Church. It will not be easy to overcome it. I met one exceptional rector who told me that his congregation consisted chiefly of Italians, to whom the characteristic stock-in-trade of anglicanism means precisely nothing. This is then a Church that will have to become more of a fellowship of reconciliation and to develop a capacity for bold experiments and imaginative pioneering if it is to transcend its present refined, restricted and characteristically suburban appeal.

Not only are these experimenting and pioneering qualities at present inconspicuous, but there is less in the tradition of the P.E.C. than of some other American churches to inspire them. It was through lack of these qualities that the P.E.C. lost its opportunity during the drive to the West in the last century, when it left other Christian bodies to evangelize the new settlers. It is commonly said that the Methodists went out West on horse-back, the Baptists by coach, while the Episcopalians waited until there were Pullman cars. Considerable efforts have since been made to capture the lost ground. They would perhaps be more successful if the P.E.C. in its upper ranks were less conservative. As is well-known, this is on the whole a Church of the privileged classes. Its bishops, I was told, are usually selected from the successful rectors of fashionable city or suburban parishes, though there has recently been some improvement in this regard. A rector, who himself had leftist sympathies, lamented to me that the P.E.C. is becoming increasingly "the Republican Party at prayer," and I found that many others, in whom those sympathies were less apparent, allowed the justice of the description, though one queried the words "at prayer."

Perhaps "conservative" is not the apt term; lack of enterprise would be better. This comes out in the Church's architecture and in its theology. It is exceedingly disappointing to find that even to-day the P.E.C. is still tied to imitation Gothic. If it can do no better than imitate, it would do well to revive the eighteenth century colonial architecture as has been done, for instance, in the chapel of the Yale Divinity School, which is enchanting. As it is, the C. of E. has produced far more in the way of new and living and exciting forms of ecclesiastical architecture, although the P.E.C. has resources which we cannot nowadays emulate. This appears to be a distressing sign of sterility.

The Church's theology seems to have been similarly, though less dismally, afflicted. The P.E.C. has more than its share of scholars of outstanding learning and ability, and a supply of competent theologians of which we might well be envious; its theological seminaries are much more adequately staffed than our theological colleges; and more encouragement is given to promising young scholars. But there is nothing like as much as one might expect to show for these advantages. It was disconcerting to discover with what veneration English theology is regarded, when one knows how little warrant there is now for that sentiment. There are plenty of native resources in America that are not yet being properly tapped or worked. Theology in the P.E.C. is

generally sound and solid of its kind, though it has its section of stale "liberal protestantism," but either way there is a lack of movement and fresh air. Men are fearful of breaking new ground or of thinking dangerous thoughts. In every direction "safety first" seems to be written up—in the moderation of episcopal pronouncements, in the anxieties of anglo-catholic orthodoxy, and in the slowness of the younger evangelicals (who as with us show most signs of life) to steal the thunder of catholicism.

So much for the lack of enterprise, which is acknowledged and deplored by the most sensitive minds in the Church, and I hasten to add that there is promise of better things in the air, if not yet in print. The P.E.C. cannot be altogether unresponsive to the restless and surging vitality that is everywhere characteristic of the U.S.A.—any more than the G.O.P. (I leave you to find out that one; it appears every day in every American newspaper). It is pertinent here to remark that this Church's influence in the universities is out of all proportion to its size in the country, and there is a rising generation of ministerial and lay students who have a deeper vision than that of perpetuating the American way of life and who are ready for radical changes. With a bolder leadership and a clearer sense of its vocation the P.E.C. might quite rapidly be transformed and make a vigorous impact on the life of the whole people in which it is set. At present it is bogged in party feuds[1] much as the C. of E. was twenty years ago. Its members resignedly mutter and even on occasion shrilly shout the old anglo-catholic, modernist or evangelical phrases which we used to know so well, but which—although the Church Union, the Modern Churchmen's Union and the Church Association still survive—have ceased to signify for most of us. But deliverance might come and spread more swiftly in America than here, once the theology of the Bible is released and the contradiction between a religious party or club and a Church is perceived, and unless I am mistaken these things are beginning to happen.

At the moment unfortunately the Church is suffering from the way the negotiations for union with the Presbyterians were handled or mishandled. There seems to have been a grave lack of ecclesiastical statesmanship in these proceedings, and in consequence nerves have been left sadly frayed. I got the impression that the Episcopalians are not yet ripe or qualified for union with Presbyterians or anyone else; it would be to their credit if they were. I will venture the mad hope that when the time for an act of unification comes the P.E.C. will be united first with a Church that is comparatively poor and socially inferior, even if theologically more remote. A union between two Churches as superior and prosperous as the Presbyterian and the Episcopalian is more than somewhat awful to contemplate, if I may say so.

[1] An alarming feature of the P.E.C. is the tendency to develop monochrome dioceses, *i.e.*, dioceses of one ecclesiastical colour. There is an area in the Middle West known to the sophisticated churchman as the Biretta Belt. This is possible because each diocese elects its own bishop, and a bishop has so much direct or indirect power and patronage that, if he is sufficiently narrow-minded, unwise and determined, he can pack his diocese with clergymen of his own views.

But I do not want to give the impression that the C. of E. has nothing positive to learn from the P.E.C., which in fact seemed to me far ahead of us in many practical aspects of church life. I have already alluded to the fact that its theological seminaries are much better staffed than ours, and on the intellectual side can do a much better job. They seem to be comparatively weak, however, on the side of training in the spiritual life. A similar contrast is apparent, if you compare the Anglican and Free Church colleges in England.

Then the P.E.C. has actually got or is doing a lot of things that we wistfully or vaguely talk about. In the College of Preachers at Washington, for example, it has an instrument of post-ordination education which we should do well to imitate, since it is unlikely that we shall be able to start anything more efficacious.

And it has a revised Prayer Book, and all the editions are identically paginated. Thus worshippers can easily be helped to follow the services, and the Church shows much skill and care in the way it gives this help, as it does also in the welcome it extends to visitors. The C. of E. by comparison appears to be cold and grossly indifferent about whether people participate intelligently in its worship. The American clergy expend much more careful preparation upon their services than we do as a rule, though I should say that modes of worship in the P.E.C. are too elaborate and ornate. There is much carrying of flags,[1] and a superfluity of candles, and an interest and a taste in ecclesiastical millinery which did not appeal to me.[2] And I failed to discover why it is that when receiving holy communion an American high anglican genuflects four times, where an English high anglican does so only once or twice, and an Irish roman catholic not at all. A reforming movement in this Church will probably have a certain note of austerity.

Parochial finances in the P.E.C. are managed with enviable efficiency. Each autumn a budget for the coming year is made out; then fifty or a hundred laymen canvass the whole congregation and find out what each member will promise to pay week by week. They continue the canvass until the whole budget is met. Moreover, budgets are very much larger than those to which we are accustomed, and there are comparatively few endowments. The budgets are so large because churches are much more adequately staffed and equipped. For example, no American congregation of any size and standing would leave its rector to deal with his correspondence and other routine work without the assistance of a professional secretary. Each church maintains offices and club rooms, etc., that make a corresponding church here look mean and shabby. They reckon that if you are going to run a church you should do so efficiently, and surely they are right. Nor do they waste their resources, as we do, by trying to maintain a

[1] Usually the stars and stripes and the flag of the P.E.C. This looks rather too nationalistic. On the other hand, the custom at Washington Cathedral of interceding on each Sunday for a different State in the Union and of displaying its flag, seems admirable.

[2] It was Bishop Johnson of Colorado, a high churchman and a great bishop, who said: "The trouble with the Episcopal Church is that there are too many solemn asses celebrating solemn masses !"

great many superfluous and obsolete establishments. Again, they aim at making their Sunday schools even more efficient, attractive and up-to-date than the day schools; indeed, they have much to teach us about the technique of "religious education." All this is not accounted for merely by the fact that the average member of the P.E.C. is better off than the average member of the C. of E. The truth is that they support the Church in a much more business-like and handsome manner. The clergy find that emigrants from the Church of England, and faithful ones at that, have to be told that where in England you may feel quite satisfied if you give 1s. a week you are expected in the P.E.C. to give the equivalent of at least 5s.

I can do no more than make the barest mention of a few other points that struck me. The clergy keep regular hours in the well-equipped offices in their churches, so that everyone knows when they are available for interviews. The P.E.C. is also much more ambitious and thorough than the C. of E. in its work in universities and colleges; every church near a university—and universities abound—has a "Canterbury Club" for college students. Choirs and church music, too, are much better than with us, and are treated more seriously. Last but not least, American Episcopalians have gone much further than we have in the practical recognition of the value of psychiatry.

In short, if the P.E.C. at present has serious shortcomings, it also has great assets. It is impossible to move about in it for long without becoming eager to see it developing its resources and rising to its opportunities, for the language of "the great opportunity," which trips so lightly but with such futility off the lips of some eminent ecclesiastics here, there really means something.

A. R. Vidler.

Aubrey Moore

The year 1948 will bring some interesting centenaries; amongst them must not be forgotten that of Aubrey Lackington Moore, the author of perhaps the most valuable of the essays in *Lux Mundi*.

Moore was born on March 30, 1848. He died after a short illness at the early age of forty-one on January 17, 1890. He held at the time of his death the office of Fellow and Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, as well as Tutor at Magdalen and Keble Colleges. It is probably no exaggeration to say that seldom has an Oxford scholar been so widely missed and so deeply mourned as Aubrey Moore. To read to-day the public tributes paid to him at his passing fills us with astonishment. It will be of interest to quote some of them.

The editor of the *Oxford Magazine* wrote thus: "The year opens very sadly for Oxford. The mournful cloud of a loss peculiarly, widely, and deeply felt, alike as a public and a private one, hangs heavily over us." The Bishop of Oxford, Dr Stubbs, said at the Diocesan Conference, "In him we lose a most wise and kindly counsellor, a man of consummate power and eloquence, most skilful in so many branches of human learning that the mere statement of his accomplishments would seem

to most people an exaggeration, and above all those, in Divine learning a most faithful and deep and critical adept. There is no estimating the loss that we have in his death." This loss, said the Bishop, was the greatest that as Bishop he was ever likely to have.

The sense of personal loss, thus expressed by Dr Stubbs, was very widespread. Many spoke of his radiant smile "in pulpit and in hall." "No one who once saw his bright smile," said Dr Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, in the University pulpit, "triumphing evidently over weakness and pain, will be likely to forget it. No one who ever talked with him about his work, or saw him with his pupils, will wonder at the influence which he exercised as a teacher both of theology and philosophy, or be surprised at the heavy cloud of sorrow that floats over Oxford to-day." "We are slowly learning at Oxford," said Dr Francis Paget, then Regius Professor of Divinity, a week later in the same pulpit, "as this term goes on what we have lost by Aubrey Moore's death. We knew how rare a mind his was, how true and resolute and fearless and delightful he had always been: but we hardly realized, I think, at how many points we should find ourselves longing in vain to hear his voice; and to some of us it seems as though Oxford can never be to us as it was while he was there, to bring clearness and courage into all perplexities, and to enrich all interests and hopes."

Aubrey Moore went up to Oxford as a Commoner at Exeter College. He obtained a First Class in Classical Moderations in 1869 and a First Class in Literæ Humaniores in 1871. In 1873 he was elected to a Fellowship at St John's College where he remained until, on his marriage in 1876, he was appointed to the College living of Frenchay in Gloucestershire. He was made deacon in 1873 by Bishop Stubbs and ordained priest three years later. He remained at Frenchay until 1881, when Dr E. S. Talbot, then Warden of Keble College, recalled him to Oxford as tutor of that College. He became also tutor at Magdalen College. These offices he retained until his death. In 1889 he was elected Fellow of Magdalen College and Dean of Divinity. "Had he lived," so it was written of him, "he would have made Magdalen a school of prophets which might have turned out some of the best priests of the day." Since 1881 he had lectured as deputy for Dr Bright, the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History. He was Select Preacher before the University 1885 to 1886, and appointed Curator of the Botanic Gardens in 1887. Shortly before his death there fell to him the unique honour of being nominated Examiner in the School of Literæ Humaniores and Theology on the same day.

Moore was a keen student of natural science, botany, zoology and biology, as well as a competent theologian with a sound knowledge of Biblical criticism, then coming to prominence. A friend related the story of a violent theological discussion in Moore's rooms at St John's one day at luncheon. "An hour afterwards the Christian philosopher was upon his knees in 'Mesopotamia' extracting beetles from willow-bark." Moore was thus by his double interest in a strong position for helping young people whose minds were puzzled by what they considered the rival claims of science and religion. "Science students who wish to believe," wrote one, "have lost their best friend." "I know,"

said another, "how the young men loved him, and how he helped them to rise above their doubts, and take another and more hopeful view of life."

Moore often lifted a heavy load from many hearts which had been disturbed by the thought of a conflict between the book of revelation and the book of nature, both of them books of God.

His unfailing sympathy with all seekers after truth was perhaps the greater because his Evangelical upbringing had been supplemented by his own devout but fearless quest for truth. "The belief in Christ and His Church," wrote Walter Lock, afterwards Warden of Keble College, then a tutor, "was his by inheritance, but he had accepted it with his full-grown mind, at a time when all such acceptance had to be won through the stress of conflict, because it satisfied at once his passion for righteousness and his intellectual craving for unity. Hence he approached questions like that of evolution with a perfect fearlessness about the result, and but lately he was encouraging others to approach the criticism of the Old Testament in the same spirit."

"It is harder to speak of what he was to those who knew him intimately," Lock continued, "the patient teacher ever ready to explain difficulties to his pupils, and lavish of his knowledge and of his best thoughts in conversation with his friends: the life and soul of common room, and the enlivener of many a dull meeting with his quick repartee and sparkling humour: the constant witness to us of spirit over matter who, while gifted with a body which could scarcely fail to make a man constantly self-conscious, and which, quickly wearied by physical effort, must have tended to make him fretful and sensitive, yet bore the burden so that we forgot that he had a burden to bear, and strove with the fretfulness till it seemed almost to have passed away. . . .

"To know him slightly was consistent with being frightened by his sharp cleverness: to know him more was to be attracted by it: to know him well was to love and admire the goodness which kept the cleverness in such control."

At Oxford Aubrey Moore's abilities were well known and recognized. It was an open secret at the time that he had declined to be nominated Dr Hatch's successor as Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History. The Board of Faculty of Theology at his death paid him a high tribute. In their resolution expressing their sorrow at the loss they had sustained by his passing they put on record their appreciation of the valuable services he had rendered "to many students in the Honour School of Theology by his attractive lectures on the History of the Reformation, whilst by his singular power of correlating theology with philosophy and natural science he exercised an important influence for good in the University at large."

Outside the University he was, as we have seen, greatly valued by his Bishop, who made him one of his Examining Chaplains and an Honorary Canon of Christ Church. In the churches of the city of Oxford he was a frequent and ever welcome preacher. Moore was Oxford preacher at Whitehall in 1887 to 1888. During Holy Week, 1888, he occupied the pulpit at St Paul's Cathedral.

Aubrey Moore has left behind him but little in the way of published

work. Perhaps the most widely known and discussed of the books which bear his name was a volume of essays and reviews, published in 1889 under the title *Science and the Faith*. Most of these essays and reviews had appeared in the pages of the *Guardian* and *Quarterly Review*. The book came as a healing balm to many who were troubled at what had appeared to them to be the conflict between revelation and science. There never could be any such conflict, Moore insisted. Darwin, whose name was so much in people's minds at that time had never, he maintained, uttered a word against religion. The truth of this statement is emphasized by an incident related in the pages of an American magazine some twenty-five years ago. A lady went to see Darwin in his old age and found him sitting in his garden reading. "What are you reading, Mr Darwin?" she ventured to ask. "Hebrews," he replied, "the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is such a grand book. I call it the royal book." The visitor ventured to remark that some people's minds were troubled by the supposed conflict between religion and science. "I know, I know," he said with a pained and troubled look. "I have written much that has disturbed the faith of many, much that I believed to be true and still believe to be true. But people misunderstood me. They should have been more patient. God cannot contradict Himself. There is no conflict between religion and science."

Moore was one of those Christian philosophers who did not misunderstand Darwin. Let us briefly summarize some of his points. Evolution he declared was to be met as a friend not as a foe. When rightly understood it would help to explain God's methods of working. But it was not to be regarded as the last word. Newman's severance between reason and conscience was fatal. Christianity did not teach a theory of a "special creation." Darwin in his scientific teaching was always cautious and reverent. St Augustine and St Thomas had both in their own way taught something very much like evolution. Thus, in the words of Dr E. S. Talbot in a sermon on St Mark's Day at Keble College, 1895, "No man did more to interpret and mediate this affinity between the faith of the Church and the thoughts of Science than did Aubrey Moore."

After the Canon's death the Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge of Magdalen College with much care and devotion put together his lecture notes on church history and edited them for publication. The volume appeared towards the end of 1890 under the title *Lectures and Papers on the History of the Reformation in England and on the Continent*. Dean Church in the pages of the *Guardian* commended its accuracy and fairness and dwelt on the author's skilful handling of the attitude of the Church of England to the Papacy. In truth, as Mr Moore points out, the English ideas of the relation of the Kingdom and Church to Rome, and of the obedience due to the Pope, had, from the days of William the Conqueror, been much looser than those which prevailed on the Continent, where rulers and people were in closer and more constant contact with the Popes, and where the study of canon laws was a perpetual reminder of their claims. The Dean pointed out that Moore had shown in his treatment of the period how utterly "un-English" were the worst kings. "Henry's idea of kingship was 'un-English'; it was even beyond

Italian tyranny; it was Asiatic and barbarian. The ways and ideas of the foreigners who were the forefathers of Puritanism and were so warmly received and well provided for in England, the Peter Martyrs, and Bucers, and A. Lascos, were utterly 'un-English'; their pedantry, their positiveness, their airs of superior wisdom and religion, as if they had come to teach the ignorant and guide the blind, did not suit English ideas." And, quoting Moore on the Marian persecution the Dean continues, "The strong Spanish influence of Philip and his inquisitors explain the fires of Smithfield. . . . The persecution can in no way be made intelligible to Englishmen except on the assumption of strong foreign influence."

The book being a collection of lecture-notes unrevised by the hand that penned them had its faults of style and was not free from technical errors. But even through the printed page we can catch a glimpse of the enthusiasm inspired by the lecturer as well as perceive the skill with which he handled his material.

There are a number of smaller works which bear Aubrey Moore's name as well as his essay in *Lux Mundi*, perhaps the most interesting in that volume. Each of these smaller works is worth careful reading—*Holy Week Addresses* delivered in Holy Week 1888 at St Paul's Cathedral; *Some Aspects of Sin*, three courses of Lent Sermons preached in the Cathedrals of St Paul's and Lincoln and in the Chapel of Keble College; *From Advent to Advent*, sermons preached at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall. There is also his address on Evolution and Christianity in *Oxford House Papers*, and three sermons in *Keble College* Sermons, 1877 to 1888.

Perhaps we may conclude this brief study of a noble character, a great scholar and a devout churchman with two quotations, one from George Romanes: "There was no mind of our own time more highly gifted in respect of its power of accurate thought, there was no man to whom religious belief was a matter of more serious reality," together with a paragraph from Dr Paget's sermon at St Mary's: "Thoroughness, reverence, consistency, humility, patience, unworldliness; these seemed by God's grace, ever growing in him: these made the keenest mind that I have ever known to be always bringing help and gladness alike to old and young. His love for truth was, I think, like that which Francis of Assisi bore to poverty: he would always go where truth led: for truth, he knew, could not betray him: and it seemed in his work as though indeed his love for truth had cast out fear."

R. D. Middleton.

The Problem of Revelation

The Bible bears witness to a revelation. The prophets of the Old Testament spoke in the name of the Lord. The apostles, preachers and prophets of the New Testament spoke by the Spirit of Jesus. Both were completely convinced that the commands which they gave and the truths which they taught had been entrusted and revealed to them by

God; that they could not have invented or discovered them for themselves; and that they could do no other than pass on the message they had received. Their whole lives testified to the completeness of their conviction that God had spoken to them; and, being filled with and possessed by this certitude, they did not, apparently, reflect upon the manner in which these revelations had come to them. For the prophets themselves, and doubtless also for such of their immediate hearers as believed them, their revelations were self-authenticating. But later generations were not content to rely upon the subjective certitude of the prophets. For them revelation became a problem, and they endeavoured to solve the problem, and to get behind the subjective certitude of the prophets, by propounding theories of the nature of revelation, or perhaps one had better say, of inspiration. Following the suggestions of Greek thinkers, and ultimately those of Plato, they eventually reached a theory of the verbal inspiration of the Biblical writers (rather than of the original prophets) which in its extreme form reduced the actual writers of the Biblical records to the status of passive instruments in the hand of God. An obvious consequence of such a theory was the assertion of the literal infallibility of the written record. Revelation thus came to be seen as the imparting (by a mysterious and unspecified method) by God to man of a series of propositions of absolute truth and universal reference. The Bible came to be used as a kind of armoury of proof-texts which the theologian could detach from their contexts and combine with one another at will. It may be noted that the Church of England (or, more precisely, the compilers of the XXXIX Articles) carefully avoided being completely committed to this extreme view. Article VI simply asserts "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." And the assertion that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation" is by no means the same as "All things contained in Holy Scripture are necessary to salvation." But in spite of this caution, the fundamentalist view of Scripture was generally current in the Church of England.

It is a familiar story that the development of historical criticism and of natural science has rendered this fundamentalist view of Scripture, and the conception of revelation on which it rests, for ever discredited and untenable. But the abandonment of fundamentalism has left theology in an uneasy position. The theologian is in danger of following one set of presuppositions when speaking as a Biblical critic, and a different, and indeed incompatible set, when speaking as a dogmatic theologian. There is a prevalent suspicion that one cannot appeal any longer to the Bible with the freedom and confidence of former generations. In fact, the nature of revelation has become an acute problem.

It may indeed be asked with some justification whether it is proper to use the word "revelation" at all. The more thoroughgoing advocates of the methods of historical criticism seem almost to have converted theology into a department of anthropology by studying

religion as a product of purely historical, human and temporal causes, and so by substituting man's discovery (if not man's creation or projection) of God for God's self-revelation to man. Historical criticism and the attitude of mind which it fosters in its practitioners, are deeply influenced by natural science. The natural scientist, with his presupposition that the universe is a closed system explicable only in natural terms, has achieved such great success that any discipline claiming the status of a science has tended to adopt the presuppositions and methods of natural science. The historian and historical critic have therefore tended to imitate the natural scientist, and to regard human history, religious history included, as a closed system. And if the historical critic has admitted the existence of God, it has been of a God who does not interfere, either by way of miracle, or of revelation, in human history. If God exists and can be known to man, He can be known because of man's discovery of Him, rather than by His revelation of Himself. Thus God is made into an object of human research and investigation, as if He were part of the natural order. The assumption that man can discover God was congenial to the optimistic temper of the nineteenth century—but it is very different from the despair at the limitation of man's powers which one finds in the Bible. The question which Zophar the Naamathite addresses to Job (Job xi, 7), "Canst thou by searching find out God?" well expresses the Biblical attitude. Indeed, so far is the Bible from countenancing the suggestion that man is capable of discovering God that it seems to favour the opposite idea, that man struggles against accepting the revelation of God when it is made. This is particularly true of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Romans. One may quote John iii, 19, ". . . the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil"; and Rom. i, 20*f.*, "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks, etc." St Paul means that nature is eloquent of God, but not in the way in which the Deist thinks it to be: to St Paul it only reveals God to one who already knows him.

This Biblical pessimism, or at least scepticism, about man's power or desire to discover God, was ignored by the optimistic Naturalism of the nineteenth century, which was partly a symptom and partly the cause of the domination of the historical method in Biblical criticism. The belief in Progress which was closely allied to Naturalism supported this optimism by its minimizing of human sin; making it a sign, not of human perversity, but of human immaturity.

Naturalism is still "in our bones," as C. S. Lewis puts it (*Miracles*, p. 197). Thus, for instance, it seems to at least one reader of the Report *Towards the Conversion of England* that there is underlying it the tacit assumption that all one has to do to make men Christians is to clear up their misunderstanding of Christian doctrine, whereupon they will naturally see its truth and accept it! But though Naturalism is thus almost second nature to modern men, theologians included, it has been

seriously challenged, in the field of theology, by a variety of attempts to re-state and re-instate the traditional emphasis on the perversity of human sin and the necessity of the divine initiative in revelation and redemption, and of the divine intervention, or indeed interference, in the natural order. Thus the theological situation today is extremely confused, and this confusion involves two dangers, the one of conceding too little to historical criticism, the other of being excessively deferential to it. It is necessary to allow it its proper place, and to keep it to its place. It is a valuable technique, with a real but limited autonomy, but by itself incapable of answering ultimate theological questions—just as natural science is, in its proper sphere, invaluable, but incapable of giving us any knowledge of the nature of ultimate reality. In particular, historical criticism may be able to make much more intelligible than it ever was in the pre-critical epoch the actual process by which the revelation attested by the Bible was imparted to man, but it cannot solve the problem of revelation by telling us what the real nature of revelation in fact is.

One must therefore look at the problem afresh, and, if justice is to be done to the plain sense of the Biblical evidence, inquire what grounds there could be for the subjective certitude of the Biblical prophets that they had "heard" the word of God. To carry this inquiry through to a satisfactory conclusion would demand not only time but learning and ability beyond what I can claim, and so in what follows I confine myself to an appeal to Christian theologians to re-consider the implications of belief in God for a theory of revelation which is neither the old (and to my mind untenable) theory of verbal inspiration nor the naturalistic idea of the human discovery of God masquerading as revelation. I in fact ask to be allowed to assume that the Biblical doctrine of God, however arrived at, is on the whole true; and on the basis of that assumption would proceed to inquire how any revelation of God to man may be imagined to have been made.

A very promising line of inquiry has in fact been started by Professor Leonard Hodgson in Lecture I of his book *The Doctrine of the Trinity* (Nisbet, 1943). In this he develops the view that God reveals Himself to men by His mighty acts in history, and that the Bible is to be understood as the testimony borne to this revelation by those who have read the lesson of history aright and discerned the significance of such events as the Exodus and the Fall of Jerusalem, that is, who have seen that such events are acts of God. Thus, to quote his own words, after discussing the effect of historical criticism and scientific discoveries on the traditional view of the Bible, he asks (p. 19):

> What have we gained at the cost of this agonising transition from the pre-critical to the post-critical approach?

and answers his question thus:

> A clearer apprehension than was given to any previous age that the revelation of God is not given in words but in deeds; that the reason why "the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ" is because they bear witness to the activity in history of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. This is not.

indeed, a new idea. But in earlier ages it was entangled with the thought of the Bible as containing the divine revelation given in the form of propositions; it is only of recent years that we have been able to see it standing clear, so that we can more fully appreciate its significance.

Professor Hodgson goes on to argue that for this revelation of God by acts to be effective—*i.e.*, to be received as revelation by men—something further is necessary, namely, that some men's minds must be illuminated by God to see the significance of His acts. Discussing (p. 30) the state of mind of a man who is conscious of being the recipient of a divine revelation, he writes:

> The believing Christian humbly acknowledges that by God's grace his eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit to see the significance of the biblical record. If this be so, there is reproduced in him the same subjective activity of response to the divine *revelatum* which inspired the prophets and the writers of the Bible itself. The eyes of the prophets were opened to see the significance of the historical events of their time; the eyes of the apostles and of other New Testament writers were opened to see the significance of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is easy to see why Professor Hodgson makes this addition to his theory. It is necessary because of the fatal ambiguity of historical events as a medium of revelation. It is only possible to see the hand of God in history, to see historical events as God's mighty acts, if you already have a fairly precise idea of what you mean by "God," and a lively faith in His power and benevolence. You have to know what you are looking for, in history as in many other things, before you can find it. You can only find God in history if you already believe in God. An event like the Exodus only appears to us to be an act of God because we now know its results, and its place in the whole movement of Biblical history, but to contemporaries—even among the Israelites—its significance was doubtless more ambiguous. It would be interesting to know what the Egyptians thought of it. But if the contention is sound that historical events, while they are actually happening, are too ambiguous to be the primary vehicles of the revelation of God, it follows that the truly primary revelation is the illumination of men's minds, as Professor Hodgson calls it, which enables them to interpret history correctly.

It may be added that one cannot limit the function of prophecy to the interpretation of God's mighty acts in history. This is an important part of prophecy; but if it were the whole of prophecy, this would limit prophecy to the past—surely a paradoxical contention, for prophecy also contains commands, warnings, and exhortations, all of which look towards the future, and are surely an authentic medium of revelation. Any adequate theory of revelation must allow more fully than does Professor Hodgson's for the fact that the Bible speaks persistently of revelation as the *Word* of God.

The reluctance of Professor Hodgson to allow for this fact of God being thought of as actually *speaking* to men, and his substitution for it of the metaphorical expression "the illumination of men's minds," seems to be due to his implicit belief that a proposition is the only form into which words may be put. This belief, coupled with his justifiable

refusal to regard revelation as given by means of propositions, compels him to minimize, if not to exclude, what may be called the *verbal* element in revelation.

But the Indicative is not the only Mood, and the proposition is not the only significant collocation of words. There is also the Imperative Mood, and it may well be argued that the primary medium of revelation is to be found in God's commands, uttered in the first place to "Moses and all the prophets," and commending themselves to the human conscience as "holy and righteous and good"—whether or not they were obeyed. It may be impossible to produce a satisfactory psychological explanation of the way in which God speaks to man; but it is no less impossible to explain psychologically what Professor Hodgson means by "illumination"; and it seems impossible to eliminate the imperative element from the Biblical revelation.

So it may be argued that the Old Testament, which is all that so far has been considered, is the record of God's mighty acts in history, seen to be such and interpreted as such by men who had learned something of God's character from hearing His commands; and also of the commands, exhortations and warnings given by the prophets in the name of God to His chosen people. It is a record of God's acts *and* words.

Similarly in the Gospels Jesus is made known as the Christ both by His acts and His words, which cannot be separated from one another. They are, in fact, almost interchangeable. Jesus taught by words in His parables. But equally truly He taught by His mighty acts, of healing, etc., which may be regarded as acted parables. The healing of the sick and the casting out of devils were signs of the substitution of God's kingdom for Satan's; *cf.* Luke xi, 20: "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." The Feeding of the Multitude and the Triumphal Entry, as well as the healings, were Messianic actions, and taught that the Christ was now present: they were implicit claims to reverence and obedience. Finally, Christ's Passion and Resurrection are demonstrations of the love of God in Christ and of its triumphant vindication. And not only are Jesus' actions means of teaching, but His words are means of action. Just as "God said, Let there be light, and there was light," so, too, Jesus said to the leper (Mark i, 41, 42) "I will; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean."

Thus in the life of Jesus act and word form one total revelation of the power and the love of God. Taken in isolation from the words of Jesus His mighty acts are ambiguous, and capable of a variety of explanations, of which the one given by the Pharisees (who did not believe His words) that "he casteth out devils by Beelzebub" is by no means the least plausible. By themselves the words of Jesus—His teaching—would have been no more effective than the often very similar teaching of other wise and good men. But it is the peculiar combination of actions and words that makes Jesus unique. It may be noted, moreover, that the imperative element which was seen to be characteristic of the words of God in the Old Testament is equally characteristic of those of Jesus in the New: *cf.* Luke iv, 36, "What is

this word? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out." It is equally obvious in his dealings with men. Jesus is usually reluctant to impart mere information; *i.e.*, His revelation is not given in the form of propositions. This is true of the Synoptic Gospels, though in the Fourth Gospel the element of information in the teaching attributed to Jesus is much larger. This may, however, be fairly ascribed to the fact that in the Synoptic Gospels we have a much closer reproduction of the actual words of Jesus—a conclusion which, by the way, is also borne out by other considerations into which this is not the place to enter. But if Jesus does not usually impart information, He is very willing to issue commands, as many passages in the Gospels testify. His appeal is throughout primarily to the will: knowledge comes through obedience. This is put very well in the words which the Fourth Evangelist attributes to Jesus (John vii, 16-17): "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself."

To sum up then, we may see in the Bible the record of the self-revelation of God made to men in word and deed: in His commands given to men through Moses, the prophets and, most importantly, through his Son, Jesus Christ, who is indeed the *Logos*, the Word of God: and in His mighty acts in history by means of which He guided, admonished and trained His chosen people Israel to receive His final revelation of Himself in the Christ: acts which could only be understood for what they were by men who had heard and submitted to the Divine Imperative. This record is contained, like treasure in earthen vessels, in the writings of men who were liable to all the frailties of mankind, and doubtless were mistaken in many matters of detail, of history, geography, and natural science, and such like. But in the essential matters of faith and morals they provide a safe and indeed indispensable guide. And so, to repeat what has already been said, "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation"—but this is not the same as "All things contained in Holy Scripture are necessary to salvation." It is possible to abandon Fundamentalism without falling into Naturalism if this distinction is maintained.

J. N. Sanders.

Charles Williams—I. The Accuser[1]

Charles Williams was born in London in September, 1886, and died in Oxford in May, 1945. Twelve years ago he was known only as the author of five strange novels, "spiritual thrillers" combining theology with the manner of the late Sir Rider Haggard. His early poetry was almost forgotten, his first volume of plays unread. To-day critics are failing in their understanding of the younger poets because they are not aware of his later poetry. His influence operates in a

[1] A lecture to the Chelmsford Diocesan Worship and Drama Association, at their Summer School at St Hugh's, Oxford, July, 1947

strange way; sometimes directly, by echo and allusion; more often as a challenge to the creation of a personal idiom, a particular poetic language that involves a mythology. T. S. Eliot lifts the language around us to the level where it can be used, and so tempts us to imitate his transposition more or less exactly. Williams instead points to a peculiar kind of transmutation of the language, and impels others to engage in the same task, by different means and with different results.

In his own early poetry the language is familiar, even derivative. It is the collocations that are strange, as in the "hymn for St Thomas Didymus, Apostle and Sceptic," where a state of mind that we should call existential anguish is set to a cheery Chestertonian tune:

> Yet no wise dare we falter
> In one word, hear us so.
> We stand before thine altar,
> Denying that we know.
>
> If thou shalt come in thunder,
> And with all evil men
> Whelm us thine anger under,
> While we confess thee then.
>
> Confess thou, ere thou sever
> Us from thy household true,
> Lord God, confess we never
> Knowing not, swore we knew.

This is difficult precisely because it looks so easy. The jaunty declamation, derived from Chesterton and Kipling, is out of tune with the subject.

The development of another, more complex and more personal idiom, was compelled by the nature of the themes. It was delayed because Charles Williams was "eccentric to contemporary writing," as Anne Ridler has said. Until 1929 his sympathies were on the whole with the traditionalists and against the moderns. Admiring Milton, he rejected Eliot, until the arch-classicist and ultra-modern was revealed as an Anglo-catholic lay theologian. The shock can be seen in the preface to *Poetry at Present* (1930), and in some sentences added to the essay of Eliot, ending up, if I remember rightly: "Can it be that the eternal footman bears some likeness to the Ancient Days?" While Bloomsbury stopped its ears at such a monstrosity as a Christian intellectual, only to open them again a little later, when the shock had subsided, Charles Williams discovered a friend. Their friendship was slow to ripen, but in 1935-6 they wrote plays in succession to one another for the same Canterbury festival, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *Thomas Cranmer*. From that time on their mutual influence grew. In the long run Williams influenced Eliot more, because his own "effortless originality," to use another expression from Anne Ridler,[1] was less open to any influences than Eliot's negative capacity, his infinite receptiveness. The immediate effect of their contact was to remove an

[1] In her introduction to *Seed of Adam* and three other plays, soon to be published by the Oxford Press.

inhibition against modernity which had kept Williams in a minor key. "Better be modern than minor," says Kenneth Mornington in the first novel, *War in Heaven* (1930), emending

> And that contextual meaning streams
> Through all our manuscripts of dreams

into

> And that impotent contextual meaning stinks
> In all our manuscripts, of no matter what coloured inks.

Most of the poems in the sequence called *Taliessin through Logres* were written before 1936, though the book was not published until 1938. In contrast with earlier poems on the same themes printed with *Three Plays* in 1931, they include a good deal of matter that is anti-poetic by romantic standards. The verse is incantatory but elastic, as

> He withers; he peers at the tide; he squeals.
> He warms himself by the fire and eats his food
> Through a maiden's motionless mouth; in his mood
> He polishes his emerald, misty with tears for the poor.

But there is no movement, not even in the plays, towards a colloquial or conversational rhythm. On the contrary the distance between verse and prose increases as a peculiar poetic language develops. The influence of Eliot is seen in repulsion as well as in attraction. In answer to the challenge thrown down by his attack on the Chinese wall, Milton's grand manner of verse, Charles Williams built a Chinese wall of his own to resist the decay of words. This wall in the end prevailed to modify Eliot's judgment where critical arguments failed. In one instance at least the imitation of Milton had been of use.

This is an important clue to the kind of obscurity which baffles us at first in Williams's poetry. The obscurity of Eliot springs from a painful effort to communicate as much as possible to those who do not share his belief or his concern, to Sweeney and Mrs Porter, the typist and her young man carbuncular, Aunt Violet and Uncle Gerald in *The Family Reunion*. Eliot has always wanted to find these people where they are and help them to "understand more," "to care and not to care . . . to sit still." He is a master of understatement, whose poetry is most difficult when he is trying to make contact with many states of mind at one moment, easiest—I do not mean best—when he is able to assume an understanding of his meaning, as in some parts of *The Rock*. Charles Williams had little or nothing of this concern for communication. Indeed in "A Myth of Shakespeare" (1928) he shows a curious incomprehension of the kind of poet who makes his poetry out of the experience of other people, whose eyes he sees in the street. He is driven to imagine a Shakespeare who himself tasted every kind of experience. Into such snares the Baconians fell.

His early poems were written for his wife, for a circle of friends and colleagues at Amen House, for students at the City Literary Institute and the Balham Commercial Institute, who derived their ideas of life and literature very largely from his lectures. I know from my own experience that however sensitive such an audience may be, its response is returned in the lecturer's own coin. All through his early

and middle years Charles Williams had too free a hand to fashion his own images.

The novels indeed were aimed at a wider public, but they were not very successful. Of the first group (1930-2) *The Place of the Lion* best deserved success, and there I think the author had good luck. His central character, Damaris Tighe, is an intelligent young woman of a type that he thoroughly understood. Her interest in the history of Platonic ideas in medieval thought helps us to entertain, on a sober, scholarly level, the possibility of these archetypal forms erupting suddenly, for good and evil, into the fields, hedges, and streets of the modern world, telling the saved of their salvation, as the Unicorn speaks to Mr Richardson in a Bethel at the Breaking of Bread; but springing out in the damned to their destruction, as in the writer of malicious anonymous letters who is turned into a snake in a scene of more than Ovidian horror. In *Many Dimensions* the stone from the crown of Solomon does a like work with everybody, but it is not so easy to believe in it; and there is a crudity in the material aims of some of the characters that lowers the tone of the drama. Similar conflicts in tone between the detective story, the thriller, and the mystery confuse us in *War in Heaven* and *Shadows of Ecstasy*, while in *The Greater Trumps* the symbols of the Tarot pack and the dancing images of gold become so powerful that they break the story to pieces. At all times Charles Williams was liable to be mastered by his matter. His sense of the being of words was greater than his sensitiveness to their meaning. A theme, an image, even a rhythm or a rhyme, could run away with him, at the expense of communication.

For this reason it seems to me important to define some of his themes and typical images, sticking as closely as possible to the poetry. We may begin with the Accuser in *Judgement at Chelmsford*, who is the Skeleton in *Thomas Cranmer*, and in *Seed of Adam* (1937), the Third King, the core of the original apple in the Garden of Eden, with his mother Myrrh, the worm in the apple bearing death. The history of this image begins with Satan in *The Rite of the Passion* (1929), who is not simply the Satan of Milton and the orthodox tradition. Rather he belongs to the first and last chapters of the Book of Job, where Satan is an angel used to test souls:

> I am contradiction and entire dismay,
> The sharp divorce where all things are not given;
> I am the left-hand pillar of the way.

In *Cranmer* he introduces himself,

> I the division, the derision, where
> the bones dance in the darkening air,
> I at the cross-ways the voice of the one way,

crying to Cranmer at the stake,

> Friend, let us say one more thing before the world—
> I for you, you for me, let us say all;
> if the Pope had bid you live, you would have served him.

And Cranmer replies: "If the Pope had bid me live, I would have served him." So he probes all our weakness, as in *Judgement at Chelmsford* (1939), where he comes

> To exhibit to men their own desires
> their love, their hunger, their hold on hell,

and to charge the Church, that

> she refuses to understand her own gospel;
> she prefers always the second best.

The witches see him as the Prince of Darkness, but that is their illusion. He is the truth that they ignorantly worship, not understanding that rejection and destruction, as well as affirmation and creation, are instruments of the Supreme Wisdom, Power, and Love. In another light he can be seen as the angel of the negative way, whereby men and women ascend to the love of God by turning from all earthly things. He comes between the things themselves and our high dreams about them, teaching us to distinguish the sign from the thing signified, the way from the end, the beloved from love. In *Taliessin through Logres* he is the questing beast whom Palomides heard when he suddenly saw that Iseult was not perfect,

> division stretched between
> the queen's identity and the queen.
> Relation vanished, though beauty stayed;
> too long my dangerous eyes delayed
> at the shape on the board, but voice was mute;
> the queen's arm lay there destitute,
> empty of glory; and while the king
> tossed the Saracen lord a ring,
> and the queen's pleasure, smiling still,
> turned to Tristram's plausible skill,
> three lines in a golden distance shone,
> three points pricked golden and were gone.
> Tristram murmured by Iseult's head.
>
> And aloof in the roof, beyond the feast,
> I heard the squeak of the questing beast,
> where it scratched itself in the blank between
> the queen's substance and the queen.

The beast is described in *Palomides before his Christending*,

> the small, slender, pointed crimson beast;
>
> the scratching, biting, sliding, slithering thing,
> whisking about in unreachable crevasses and cracks,
> in cliffs and boulders; the smooth-backed head-cocked
> snout, and fat rump, and claws on the rock;
>
> the blatant agile beast. . . .

Dinadan sums him up to Palomides,

> Sir, if ever in a blank between this and that
> The sky turns on you, and the path slides
> To the edge not the front of the eyes. . . .

This is the experience that we call in *cliché*, "the earth opening under our feet." It can be, and often is, a descent into hell; but it is also a way to rejecting idols and ideals that must be rejected if we are to move forward upon the way. Charles Williams never concealed the horror of evil, and of the final nothingness, the complete denial and destruction, that he called Po'lu; but at the same time he always insisted on its ultimate impotence. And this is an understatement. Perhaps the most impressive image of his meaning is at the end of *All Hallows Eve* (1944), his last novel, where the dupes and victims of the sorcerer Simon are healed by his daughter Betty, born of a magical substitution for a purpose of power, redeemed by a secret baptism at the hands of an ignorant nurse, restored by the love of Jonathan and the offering of Lester, her schoolmate among the early dead. At the end of *The House of the Octopus* (1945), when all the Christians but one have been killed, and the empire of Po'lu is in complete control of the island, the Flame is in complete control of the pattern of the future.

The Flame is on one side a further development of the Accuser image, prepared in *Grab and Grace* (1941), where Grace is a mischievous boy playing tricks on sin and pride. While the Accusers are negative he is an image of light. Yet he appears to the pagan Assantu as "Father and Eater." The Flame says to him,

> What you can see here
> is only a spark of the furious dance we made
> before my companions and I were gathered and thrown
> and sealed to the Christian altars and the souls of men.
> It is your nature you see, Assantu, not me.

Perhaps this explanation, primarily for the audience, is not unrepresentative of some weakness in the texture of the image. The Flame was not yet in focus; moreover when the play was written Charles Williams was changing his mind about problems of communication.

George Every, S.S.M.

(*To be concluded.*)

With Me in Paradise

When I decided to come to a missionary diocese as a Priest-Schoolmaster, it was understood that teaching at the diocesan secondary school was to be my main duty, and that I would help in the neighbouring parishes whenever time would permit. A few months after my arrival however, the Prison Chaplain became ill, and because I happened to be free on the coming Sunday I was asked to take the Prison Service in his place. Without any great enthusiasm, this I did. Like most normal people I was not attracted by the thought of visiting a prison, and ministering to people who, to begin with, could not even live peaceably with their fellow men. For a few Sundays I continued to visit the prison, and gradually I became accustomed to the strange congregation and unusual conditions of worship. I was not used to

preaching behind bars, and to a congregation which respected the truncheons of the guards, in all probability, more than my message. Then suddenly there came staggering news. There was a prisoner in the condemned cell, under sentence of death, and I, as acting-chaplain, was required to minister specially to him and give him what spiritual comfort I could. As long as I live I shall not forget my first interview with the condemned man. I found him subdued, rather dazed, and anxious to have someone to whom he could talk freely. It is appointed to all men to die, but it is not often that we can meet a strong healthy man in the prime of life, who knows to within a day or two when the end will come and by what means. A few days later there came another shock: a second murderer was sent up from the courts to await his execution. In the weeks which followed, I came to know these two men well, and before the end, I came to see that this duty which I at first regarded with distaste was to me at least a deep spiritual experience. It may be that my experiences in those weeks can be of interest and help to others to whom prison life is a foreign land.

First of all, I must say something of the two men.[1] William was a quiet-spoken young negro of thirty-four years of age, married, childless, and a farmer on a lonely tropical island. The bully of the village threatened him once too often, and in a fit of blind rage, William had killed him with a sharp-edged gardening tool. He was baptized but unconfirmed, and was in the habit of attending at Church once in a while. David, the second condemned man, was a grandfather of forty-four years of age. He also was a negro farmer on a primitive out-island. One night he returned home in a drunken state from a village dance. On reaching his house he had found his daughter in a compromising situation. To complicate matters further he himself was fond of his daughter in an irregular and unnatural way. Without more ado David had reached for his shotgun and killed the intruding male. Then to conceal his guilt he had compelled his wife and his daughter to throw the body into the sea.

When I first met these two men I had no fixed views on the morality of capital punishment, but like many others I had often considered and discussed the justice of taking a life for a life. I may say that I am still as undecided as before whether or not man, in the name of society, has any right to punish by death. Is it right to make an example of one man so as to teach a lesson to the others? This problem was made more involved by a chance remark of the Superintendent's that in his long experience murderers were among the most docile of the prison population. One of the best house servants his wife had ever had was a reprieved murderer. I soon came to see that whatever my views might be on this subject, it was my duty more than ever as a priest to prepare men to face their Creator, whether that event be far or near. It was necessary to decide quickly how best to convince these men that they too could share in our Lord's Redemption.

In the days which followed, new light came on these problems. Our

[1] This article is a strict record of fact, but so as to avoid any risk of misunderstanding or of possible embarrassment to certain persons in the diocese concerned, the writer has concealed the identity of the two condemned men.

conversations in those gloomy, airless cells of a West Indian prison brought me to see that God's mercy cannot be less real than man's. If somebody steals your wallet and then tells you afterwards that he is sorry, you may forgive him. If in addition to confessing his penitence he brings a new wallet back to you, then you must accept his sorrow as sincere. On those crosses on Calvary there were two evil-doers. One died in his sin, but the other asked for pardon, and went to God with a humble heart. The Gates of Paradise were opened for him. The murderer who willingly gives back to God what he has taken, as a proof of his penitence, is surely no less worthy than the Penitent Thief of hearing the glorious words: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." In those last awful days, William and David came to see slowly but surely that if they offered themselves ungrudgingly to God, paying back a life, which was what they had taken, then they too could share the hope and the promise of the Penitent Thief.

The remarkable thing about these two men in their last days was the inspired calmness which came upon them. Although they were awaiting the results of an appeal for mercy which was being made, they were both resigned and ready for "what might happen." (We never used the word "execution," but always some kind of euphemism instead.) During these days and nights both had frequent and vivid dreams in which they lived again through some of the familiar and memorable experiences of the past. On the eve of the announcement that the appeal had failed both had strangely prophetic dreams in which they saw themselves already as dwellers in heaven. And they were happy in the knowledge that heaven was a place of great joy. I had never been so sure before as I was then that God hears our prayers, and that He gives strength according to our needs. As the end drew near, their calmness and resignation increased. They had the serene manner of men about to be offered up in martyrdom, rather than of criminals about to receive the severest punishment of all. To them, the words of the Gospel, our discussion of it, and our prayers were words of life.

Many an afternoon we spent singing softly the words of some old familiar hymn, not very tunefully perhaps, but lingering lovingly over the words as we sang. Hymns, by music and by word, played a great part in our interviews in those last days. As the end came nearer, so did their readiness become more apparent. Warders said that often in the quiet dark hours of the night, one of them might be heard singing softly, almost as a lullaby:

> "O my Saviour, lifted
> From the earth for me,
> Draw me, in Thy mercy,
> Nearer unto Thee."

On the Sunday morning before they died, William was led upstairs to the little private chapel where the Lord Bishop awaited him. There at his own request he received the Sacrament of Confirmation. The next morning he made his first and last Communion. David, who was a Baptist, also received his Communion from a Baptist minister a few days before he died. No Confessions could ever have been more earnest

than those they chose to make on that last Sunday. More than once William expressed a regret that he could not go home to his quiet village, if only for a day, so that he could warn some of the young men he knew never to let the devil gain the mastery over them, and lead them into sin. It was a comfort to him to be reminded that when the news of his Confirmation was spread abroad that in itself would be a great act of Witness. He was eager to let his friends know that he was facing God with a clean heart, as a humble sinner who had sought and found his Father's forgiveness. There was a touch of the sublime in William's being able to tell his sister one day in an interview in the Superintendent's room that she was not to worry for what was to happen to him. After all, she could sleep more soundly in her bed when people such as he were punished for their crimes. There was something reminiscent of Apostolic times in David's last message which he dictated to me, as I sat writing on the cover of one of his books: "Tell George goodbye, tell Andrew goodbye. . . ." And then came a long list of goodbyes as he thought lovingly of his family whom he was leaving behind. He was especially anxious that his daughter be told that he had forgiven her for giving evidence against him at his trial.

Those sad but great days taught me that even a murderer, if he repents, can hold his head high, and be respected by the best of us. God gives His Grace, and it is sufficient for those who need and ask. The rightness of capital punishment may still remain an unsolved problem, but I have never been so proud of being a priest as I was when I knew that God was using me to help two lonely souls.

In the prison service on the Sunday morning before the execution everyone present knew and thought of the two men standing at their cell doors not many yards away. Only a hard man would have remained unmoved to hear the congregation sing the hymns which William and David had themselves asked to hear in that service. The hymns were: "O my Saviour, lifted"; "A few more years shall roll"; and "For ever with the Lord." Both men were happy at the end because they knew that before long they would be kneeling before Him who can make all things pure. To close that memorable service, the congregation sang with great sincerity on their knees, the last verse of "For ever with the Lord."

On the last morning, in the full beauty of a new day, William and I stood at the window looking out at the rich red blossoms of a poinciana tree. Suddenly he turned to me and said: "Soon, Father, I shall be looking at flowers very much more beautiful than those." Only the Grace of God could enable men so wretched to die so magnificently.

D.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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CORRESPONDENCE

WHY NOT THE PRIESTHOOD?

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

THEOLOGY continually reflects the increasing shortage of clergy to man the parishes. One of your contributors is sufficiently daring to suggest a permanent diaconate of men earning their living in secular vocations. Is the priesthood impossible for such men? Dons, schoolmasters, organizing secretaries are priests: why not doctors, managers, etc.? At present too many congregations are dependent on visiting priests from other parishes. Why cannot the congregation receive ministry from one of themselves, provided he is duly ordered by the bishop? In fact, of course, we shall be driven to this when the finances of the Church (as they ultimately will) compel the clergy to follow secular professions. Can we not recognize now that it is not only a desperate expedient but an evangelical practice? Who else were the *presbyteroi episcopoi* of Acts xx?

Yours, etc.,
F. B. WELBOURN.

MAKERERE COLLEGE,
KAMPALA.
September 20, 1947.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER. The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes. By Francis Wright Beare. Basil Blackwell. 15s.

Dr Beare has written a commentary on the Epistle which succeeds in being at once concise and readable. His exposition is always fresh and to the point, even when one disagrees with it, and no one, I think, could fail to derive from it new insight into the Epistle and stimulus to study it further. Particularly happy is his interpretation of the threefold phrase in i, 2, of the reference to the subjection of "angelic" power in iii, 22, and of the dedication of individual gifts in iv, 10, 11. It should be added that Dr Beare has a wide-open eye for textual variants and makes good use of what he sees: the Introduction contains a brief but most useful *apparatus criticus*.

Yet with so many things in the book which are satisfying or suggestive, I find myself missing something; and when I try to define it, I think it is a certain element of the concrete, of "flesh and blood," of personal equation, which would serve to integrate the whole. Dr Beare writes with disarming candour that his work is "based upon the thesis, now widely accepted, that First Peter is a pseudonymous work of the post-Apostolic age," and that thesis is not likely to be better exemplified than it is here. I agree, too, that "the justification of the thesis must depend upon the commentary"; but it is just here that I think the case fails. The point is of special interest to me if I may be autobiographical for a moment; because I came at the problem from another angle. I started my long labours on the Epistle with an open mind on the

questions of authenticity and date—aware, of course, of the weight of scholarship in this country (though not only here) in favour of a conservative answer to these questions, but inclined to suspect that it was too good to be true. The purely external arguments on either side seemed to me very evenly matched; what gradually turned the scale in my mind was the internal evidence of the Epistle itself, particularly the way in which passage after passage was illuminated and fell into place, if the Petrine authorship, with full allowance for Silvanus' part in it, were true. That is the positive side of this case: it covers—and uncovers—the largest number of facts.

But the negative side of it—the criticism of the "liberal" view—is equally strong. Thus, the "Paulinism" attributed to 1 Peter breaks down on examination. Dr Beare's note on ii, 13-17 is particularly instructive; for he recognizes that the differences from Rom. xiii are little less striking than the resemblances. And that is the case also on every major issue: St Paul's most distinctive doctrines are wholly absent from 1 Peter. The similarities, therefore, are solely matters of phrase. But here the "Paulinist" claim loses most of its force, when we recognize that these similarities are equally observable in James, Hebrews and the Pastorals. Dr Beare is aware of the work of Weidinger, Lowther Clarke and Wand on the "household codes" which circulated in the primitive church, but is unconvinced by it; and Dr Daube's Note in my edition, and the extensive tables with which I illustrated the point, appeared too late to be available for his consideration. But the essence of the case for a "common store" of catechetical teaching had really been made out, I think, by the publication in 1940 of Archbishop Carrington's *The Primitive Christian Catechism*; and Dr Beare seems to have missed this most important little book. The fact is that the Synoptic criticism of the Epistles is already well under way, and no "liberal" thesis is likely to be, or to remain, "generally accepted," unless it comes to terms with it. Its importance, moreover, is not merely one of literary criticism; for this Synoptic study takes us close to the actual life and missionary methods of the Apostolic Church—to its flesh and blood.

The theory that the Epistle is pseudonymous and a product of the age of Domitian, if not of Trajan, really depends for its force on one consideration and one alone, namely the nature and date of the persecutions referred to in it. Dr Beare admits that the allusions to "trials" in i, 6 and to "suffering" in iii, 13-17 are too vague and of too contingent a character to take us very far; but he claims that the persecution envisaged in iv, 12-19 is something much more actual and demands a more precise explanation. But I must confess myself no more convinced by Dr Beare than Hort was by Sir William Ramsay. The "ordeal" referred to in iv, 12 as already present might, indeed, refer to some actual exacerbation of trouble, news of which reached the author's ears before the letter was despatched, and led him to add some additional verses. But once we realize the force of Mommsen's statement that persecution of the Christians was "a standing matter in the first century," such a hypothesis is unnecessary: the "ordeal" lay in the fact of constant insecurity and danger. Persecution "for the name"

did not arise, Dr Beare claims, until the days of Trajan; and I am inclined to agree that, if an official and public persecution be in mind, there is more to be said for that date than for a Domitianic date. But what persecutions of Christians in the first century were not "for the name"? Acts iv, 17 and ix, 21, and many other passages in the New Testament, suggest that the phrase arose very early, and indeed inevitably: its inverted commas are a convenience of modern scholarship. Dr Beare makes much of the resemblance between the charges against the Christians referred to by Pliny in his letter to Trajan and those alluded to in 1 Peter iv; but actually only one of them is identical. Dr Dodd (*The Guardian*, March 22, 1946) is more impressed by the discrimination drawn in both documents between ordinary criminal charges and indictment "for the name" itself; but the point only holds good if 1 Peter, like Pliny, is dealing with court proceedings. That, however, is just what, to my mind, is unproven. 1 Peter speaks of his readers being "reproached," not "accused"—though there were plenty of words available for the latter; and of the Christian "suffering," not "being convicted" or "punished"—though, of course, the crimes he mentions would have led to that, if the guilty were brought to trial. The whole atmosphere reads to me far more like that with which we are familiar in Acts and Thessalonians than that of Pliny's letter.

It is worth remembering also that the Emperor and his higher officials would have been more likely to act at times when public opinion showed signs of hostility to the Christians. Thus, Eusebius (vi, 41) records a letter addressed to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch, by Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, in which he writes, "The persecution with us did not begin with the imperial edict (of Decius), but preceded it a whole year"; and what follows in the letters show that this "persecution" consisted in a series of acts of mob-violence against the Christians. That is exactly the type of calamity which, I surmise, threatened the Christians of northern Asia Minor during the year before Nero's outburst. And it is significant that we have no other evidence besides Eusebius for the persecution which the Bishop of Alexandria describes, yet do not refuse it credence.

I have dealt with this matter somewhat fully because I am sure that the "liberal" theory, however widely accepted it may be across the Atlantic, cannot be uncritically assumed, and indeed meets with formidable difficulties, and also because the Epistle is less easily explained on this view than on the other. But that should not deter readers from a careful study of Dr Beare's book, for they will find in it much illuminating comment. The section of the Introduction, moreover devoted to the theology of the Epistle is a particularly well-balanced summary of the book's teaching. On one doctrinal crux, the interpretation of 1 Peter iii, 19-22, I should like to draw attention to an important study of the passage by a Swedish scholar, which appeared after Dr Beare's work was already in the press. It is *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism*, by Bo Reicke of the University of Uppsala. If, as I hope, Dr Beare's book goes into a second edition, Reicke's thesis will deserve his attention.

E. G. Selwyn.

Winchester.

Revelation and Reason: The Christian Doctrine of Faith and Knowledge. By Emil Brunner. S.C.M. Press. 25s.

Let God be God! An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther. By Philip S. Watson. Epworth Press. 10s. 6d.

I hope we are not going to fall into the sociological fallacy of declining to meet Barth and Brunner on the plane of truth. This latest book of Brunner's to be translated deserves a special welcome from English-speaking people. It does not advance the argument, but it is Brunner's most remarkable expository achievement, and it is a valuable effort to frame a "text-book" on introductory theological problems. If as a whole the English-speaking theological world moves from a discussion of "the validity of religious experience" to a discussion of the relation between "Revelation and reason" we shall do well.

The book is in two parts. Part one deals with the nature of revelation, and is a persuasive exposition of the truth that the biblical Revelation is concerned with the manifestation of God in His action in history rather than the articulation of inerrant truths of revelation. Here there are four parts—Revelation as Origin, the Historical Revelation, the Revelation in the witness to the Revelation, and Revelation as Fulfilment. The only general comment that needs to be passed here is first that the Continental absolute cleavage between Catholic and Protestant is a limiting factor, and secondly that Brunner has revised his earlier opinions and presents his thinking in a balanced form.

The most interesting part of the book for those already familiar with the main lines of Brunner's teaching is the second part on the truth of the revelation. This deals with such issues as the problem of doubt, the world religions, the naturalistic theory of religion, biblical faith and criticism, the hopes of Revelation and the hopes of Reason, rational theology, etc. I would draw especial attention to the chapter on "the problem and the idea of Christian philosophy" which leads Brunner to say, at p. 412, that "the treatment of the relation between religion and history, reason and revelation, in A. E. Taylor's 'The Faith of a Moralist' is a classic example of genuine Christian philosophy."

"It may seem a strange thing," writes Brunner (pp. 394-5), "that a theologian should lay so much stress on Christian philosophy. The explanation is simple: because even a theologian must never forget what the 'priesthood of all believers' means and what it involves. For far too long the Church of the Reformation has been burdened and hindered by the idea that the intellectual aspect of Christianity *must* be theology. This misunderstanding has considerably broadened the gulf between the theologians and the so-called laity, a gulf that was already wide enough through the organization of the church as a 'Church of pastors.' Christians who were not theologians found that their questions—questions that arise out of the existence of Christians in the world—were unanswered, for theology did not possess the means to answer these 'lay questions,' and in accordance with its own definition it was not in a position to answer them. We had not the men who in their own spheres as specialists could give expression to their Christian truth —the jurists, the philologists, the historians, the natural scientists, the

political scientists, who were so sure, both of their expert knowledge and of their faith that they dared to be *Christian* jurists, natural scientists, and historians." This is most encouraging, though even Brunner does not go so far as to ask what the relation is of the Christian revelation to the task on which the philosopher as a philosopher is engaged.

There are three main issues concerning Revelation and Reason. One is whether reason constitutes an independent source of Divine truth co-ordinate with Revelation. Here Brunner is as uncompromising as Barth. His "general revelation" is as strictly biblical as anything else, and the issue between him and Barth seems to me purely terminological. They both hold that there is no natural theology. I should agree with them that natural theology is in no sense co-ordinate with Revelation, but I should hold that *within* Revelation natural theology in its true form has a limited part to play, and that the fluctuating relationship between Revelation and natural theology in its legitimate and in its illegitimate forms is a sign of the mercy of God and a fact which gives interest to life.

Another issue is the part played by reason in theological reflection, and on the many aspects of this question Brunner is exceedingly illuminating and balanced in his treatment. There is, however, a third issue which concerns the Relation between Revelation and reason in its social and practical aspect. No doubt this latter depends upon the time and place of the theologian, but the reason of the Swiss in their day to day judgments would be at least comparable with that of the inhabitants of the British Isles. Brunner, however, does not discuss the question. This is a pity, because it is not the formal correctness of theology that matters, but its maximum impact in a *true* perspective in the social life of man. Brunner sees this, and one may hope that his Gifford lectures will carry his thinking forward in this direction.

It is regrettable that only limited material is available to English readers for a serious study of Luther. We need more translations of Luther, more translations of notable Continental works on the subject, and more comprehensive studies by English scholars. For that reason Mr Watson's Fernley-Hartley Lecture is to be welcomed. He is enthusiastically devoted to Luther, and uses his careful scholarship and linguistic attainments to set forth Luther as he really was. His five chapters on Luther as a theologian, the motif of Luther's thought, the Revelation of God, the theology of the Cross, and the Doctrine of the Word, give the pith of Luther's theology—and may be commended to anyone who wants to understand the real Luther. On the other hand, it is not clear that Mr Watson does real justice to the Scholastics—after all, everything can be exaggerated, even theocentricity. See, for example, the remarkable essay by Victor White, O.P., on the Atonement in the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas in the symposium *What Christ means to me*, published by James Clarke. Further, it is to be hoped that Mr Watson will pursue his Luther studies, because what we need is not limited essays, but a full-dress survey which can be accepted as giving a true focus to Luther's voluminous writings.

BRADFORD. H. CUNLIFFE-JONES.

THE ENGLISH CLERGY AND THEIR ORGANIZATION IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES. By A. Hamilton Thompson. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 20s.

It is a matter for congratulation that the leisure ensuing on Professor Hamilton Thompson's retirement from the chair of History at Leeds has enabled him to prepare for publication his Ford Lectures delivered at Oxford in 1933; as also that the present restrictions on paper have not prevented the Clarendon Press from publishing a volume so valuable to the student of English church history. Perhaps we may reckon it, in somewise, a further fortunate circumstance that the rapid exhaustion of the first printing delayed the sending of a review copy to THEOLOGY until December last. On all counts this is a book worth waiting for; since the author brings his unrivalled knowledge of the church in England in the later middle ages to the task of interpreting briefly its organization during the period immediately preceding the changes of the Tudor reformation. It is possible to see clearly and succinctly the abuses which called for reform and also the extent to which the general structure of ecclesiastical organization, including too many of its abuses, survived the sixteenth-century reformation and even continued until the opening of the Victorian age.

Very properly Professor Hamilton Thompson begins with the episcopate, and proceeds speedily to dispose of the romantic notion that the middle ages conceived of a bishop as primarily a father-in-God and a pastoral ruler. "The benignant idea of a father in God and a shepherd of souls . . . no doubt existed in theory. But the prevailing aspect of the bishop's paternity was its severity, and in the attitude of the pastor to his flock the spirit of correction was more prominent than that of compassion. . . . He was the *judex ordinarius*. . . . When he went upon his ordinary visitation he sat judicially as a tribunal." An aggravation of this conception of the office and work of a bishop sprang from the circumstance that the predominant factors in determining the choice of prelates were political rather than ecclesiastical: bishops were expected to be *utiles regi et regno*; and accordingly "the great prizes of the church still fell . . . to secular clerks of the ministerial class." The king had the chief voice in their selection, and the series of bargains between king and pope relegated to insignificance the formalities of capitular election and confirmation by the metropolitan. But this system of appointment offered *une carrière ouverte aux talents*; for the kings desired prelates of proved ability rather than of noble birth; and in fact "bishops were habitually appointed on the ground of their ability without distinction of rank." With such a provenance of the episcopate, it was to be expected that most of their duties would be delegated to deputies; and Professor Hamilton Thompson takes leave to doubt whether "their presence or absence mattered so greatly to their dioceses," since "for all ordinary purposes" the bishop's work "could be well done by a deputy." Accordingly, in one of the most instructive chapters of his book, the author describes the apportionment of the duties of the diocesan bishop between his vicar-general, official, archdeacon, rural-dean, and suffragan-bishop. Of these, the first-named was much the most important, especially when the offices of vicar-

general and official were united, whilst the suffragan-bishop had least status and security of tenure. Indeed the bishops *in partibus infidelium* or the prelates of Irish sees, who eked out a living by acting as suffragans to English diocesans, were simply "general utility men." It was not unnatural that the negligence of bishops was copied by their archdeacons so that "archidiaconal visitations indeed became rare in the course of the fourteenth century." Diocesan administration therefore suffered greatly from this neglect of duty.

When Professor Hamilton Thompson passes to cathedral and collegiate churches, he corrects another romantic notion by his observation that "the idea which today converts such churches into active centres of diocesan life is certainly quite modern"; since they were in effect "corporations of clergy, whose sole duty, whether in person or by deputy, was to maintain a continual succession of services, in choir and at their altars, for the good estate of founders and benefactors while living and for their souls after death." They were the close preserve of the higher clergy; for in the medieval church "there was a strongly drawn line of distinction between the higher clergy, the *sublimes* and *litterati*, men of birth and lettered clerks, and the crowd of inferior clergy, vicars, curates and chantry chaplains, whose education was rudimentary and who lived on small stipends. The prizes of the church were reserved for a class which may definitely be called professional." In describing the parish clergy, Professor Hamilton Thompson gives an account of the ordination of vicarages, of the prevalence of pluralism and non-residence, and of the astonishing trade in the exchange of benefices which was characteristic of the later middle ages; and he reminds readers that the term "parish priest was used exclusively" of the "unbeneficed priest, known as the parish chaplain, curate or priest, hired for a small annual salary." Another remarkable feature of the late medieval church was the large-scale growth of chantry chapels and altars, with the consequent class of chantry priests, ordained in great numbers and with comparatively little to occupy their time; and of these chantry-foundations Professor Hamilton Thompson writes with expert authority and profusion of detailed illustration. They were largely foundations of the middle classes and represented the particular contribution of this social class to ecclesiastical life. Finally, the lectures close with a survey of the religious orders, of which, with the exception of the Carthusians, the reluctant conclusions to be drawn are those of general and widespread decline alike of piety and learning. "It is impossible to escape the conclusion that English monasteries in the fifteenth century needed spiritual quickening to justify their existence as a whole. The monastic ideal was forgotten; religion . . . was perishing. Learning was at a standstill."

Here, then, is a feast of good things for the student of church history; and each of these several subjects is illuminated with a plenitude and variety of detailed illustration, characteristic of the author's erudition. Yet this is, literally, but half of his treasure-house; for to the 186 pages of text there are added just over a hundred pages of *pièces justificatives*, which are of the utmost value to the professional student. The seven

appendices into which these are collected are worthy of careful and detailed study. The result of Professor Hamilton Thompson's work is therefore a synoptic picture of the organization of the English church in the later middle ages, which will be indispensable to all students and teachers. The reader will be able the better to understand some of the features of the Tudor reformation: the disappearance from the episcopate of Henry VIII's later years of the civil servant type of prelate; the royal plundering alike of chantry foundations and monasteries; and, side by side with these changes, the survival for a further four centuries of the cathedral and collegiate churches with their pluralism, and the continuing gulf between the higher and the lower clergy. Professor Hamilton Thompson does not concern himself with the religious and theological issues of his subject; but his evidence goes far to explain the misesteem of the priesthood caused by the multitude of chantry priests, and the criticism of the doctrine of the Mass springing from the multiplication of *obits*. It is plain from his account why the Henrician bishops followed king rather than pope when the conflict of loyalties became acute; and how woefully inadequate was their equipment to deal with the theological issues raised by the reformation. Professor Hamilton Thompson indeed has given readers full measure, pressed down and running over, both in richness of detail and the surety of generalization which characterize his description of the English clergy in the latter middle ages.

CAMBRIDGE. NORMAN SYKES.

B. K. CUNNINGHAM. A Memoir by John R. H. Moorman. S.C.M. Press. 12s. 6d.

Dr Moorman has succeeded in a difficult task. He has written a most readable and attractive account of the life of B. K. Cunningham, which will greatly please those who knew him, and will also convey an impression of the man to those who did not. Much of the book is composed of reminiscences sent by friends and of extracts from letters, occasional papers, and sermons, but it tells a moving, straightforward story. Readers will disagree about which of the many comic tales is the most memorable. Perhaps the story of B. K. out in Delhi in the 'nineties betting a supposedly dying missionary that he was not going to hell and so startling him that he recovered and still survives, is the best of all. Fortunately for former members of Westcott House few of B. K.'s sermons are printed, but, even so, it would be well for them to buy the book to make sure which ought no longer to be plagiarized. But to read his life is to admire. A former army padre who attended his school in France in the Great War remarked recently that during the week's retreat B. K. did not make one foolish remark. This memoir leads one to think that during his whole life his understanding of the things of religion as well as the things of this world was such as is given to few.

The author exercises a restraint characteristic of his subject in permitting himself few reflections, but one comment seems necessary.

B. K.'s life work was the training of clergy and the principles underlying this work need constant scrutiny. He believed that one of the most ominous features of the Church of England was the fact that so many of its theological colleges were by trust deed or tradition monochrome, and so he took much trouble to ensure that, both at Farnham and at Westcott, there should be a fellowship of differences, a thing quite distinct from "central churchmanship" and certainly not easy to maintain. That he had here detected a serious weakness is apparent from the first recommendation of the *Archbishops' Commission on the Relations between Church and State, 1935*, that before legislative action can be taken to secure greater freedom for the Church, there must be greater agreement within the Church. The drift of the present discussion of *Canon Law in the Church of England* suggests that this view is still true to day. B. K. worked more effectively than any other man in his generation for that agreement, but the party training of clergy in institutions where his ideal is unacceptable perpetuates, almost ensures, future disagreement. On certain crucial subjects there is not even agreement to differ. But though agreement in diversity or the common life as sketched in this memoir has been B. K. Cunningham's most significant gift to the Church to-day, it is not this which one remembers as one puts down this book; rather it is his shrewd, yet costly, care for his friends, or his adventures with "the natives" in France, or his acceptance of his deafness, or most of all the feeling of genuineness, of authenticity, that when he talked of religion he knew what he described and meant what he said.

Alan Webster.

Westcott House,
Cambridge.

Five Questions before the Church. By the Bishop of Rochester. Canterbury Press. 3s. 6d.

Towards a Better England. By the Bishop of Truro. Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly. 2s. 6d.

These episcopal charges will hardly give a vast amount of reassurance to the tenuous front line of a perplexed and tattered Church. Neither does more than nod in passing at either the depths or the details of our challenging precariousness. To say this is not to "blame the bishops" that the Church finds itself under the merciful judgment of God nor is it to expect them to be second Wesleys or second Hildebrands. But a more apparent awareness of crumbling props and haunting needs together with a claim upon endurance and adaptability might send us back to our dogged rounds braced and redirected. There is an ingredient missing from the dish with which bishops might be expected to feed their flocks in 1947, and both these helpings leave a rather frightening void behind for want of it.

The Bishop of Rochester does indeed deal with pressing questions and refreshingly. His chapter on the Church and Marriage demands particular attention. He bases the Christian insistence that the marriage bond must be permanent, not on a legalistic interpretation of

our Lord's words about divorce, but on the ground, both scriptural and natural, that "the twain shall become one flesh." (Here, one supposes, the biologists of the Peckham Experiment would be at one with us.) From this he argues that the Eastern Orthodox theory of the "death" of a marriage deserves closer consideration from the Church of England than it has yet received. Certainly a discussion of the subject is notable which thus bases itself on an idea of what marriage is and not merely on arguments in whichever direction from expediency.

The Bishop's treatment of Sunday, grounded though it is in such biblical insights as the Creator's sabbath rest and the new creation in the Risen Christ, is less convincing. "I have refrained," he writes, "from suggesting what recreations are lawful and desirable on a 'holy' day set apart for rest and worship." But is not that exactly the question which needs to be faced? If we are not to be quite fairly under suspicion of still wishing to make the Lord's Day primarily a day of prohibitions, we must set ourselves, not merely to acquiesce in, but to encourage both the right kind of recreation and conditions in which it will be possible. We cannot content ourselves with urging the citizens to go for nice walks in the fields and woods that no longer exist near the majority of English homes.

Towards a Better England is a less weighty document. Indeed it consists very largely, both in idiom and in content, in an expression of the Bishop of Truro's preferences. Even where one shared these, one wished that there might have been a broader treatment.

WIGAN. FRANK BENNETT.

THE WINTER'S TALE: A STUDY. By S. L. Bethell. Staples Press. 10s. 6d.

Within recent years, two trends in Shakespearean criticism have become noticeable. The first exists to deny the thesis that the Elizabethan theatre was a purely secular institution, and that Shakespeare's plays in particular were concerned with purely human problems, glorifying human destiny and character, but lacking anything that could be described as a theological content. The other school of critics work on the presupposition that poetry is addressed to the nervous system, that a play of Shakespeare is a poem first and foremost, and that its inner meaning is to be apprehended intuitively, through an analysis of the versification and the imagery. Matters of purely stage technique are allowed, at best, only a secondary place in the critic's final estimate of the play. Its textual history and present textual condition are allowed no bearing at all.

Mr Bethell is in the happy position of being able to make the best of both worlds; his approach to the *Winter's Tale* is both Christian and psychological; he unites the two trends in himself. He carries the work of Professor D. G. James a stage further, and shows that the play's central themes—regeneration and forgiveness, the way in which the wrongs of one generation are righted by love and harmony in the next—have a more exactly Christian application than might have been

supposed, and this in spite of the play's superficially "pagan" setting and atmosphere. For the paganism is overshadowed by the religious and non-pagan implications of the imagery, containing oblique references to sin (original and committed), grace, repentance, the providence of God, and Christian religious ceremonies. The *Winter's Tale* is no longer the romantic tragi-comedy that our forefathers enjoyed, but a symbolical drama, a synthesis on a quasi-mystical plane of good and evil, human happiness and sorrow, the natural and the supernatural life, embodying Shakespeare's deepest reading of human experience, and (p. 118) "an important moment in the history of Christian civilisation."

Mr Bethell's general conclusions carry conviction, though he exaggerates, and has not avoided the potential dangers of his critical method. As Shakespeare's verse is the starting point, Mr Bethell's *Winter's Tale* is never visualized in terms of the theatre (his remarks upon dramatic technique are concerned merely to prove that it was "antiquated"); at one point (p. 26*n*.) he can solemnly discuss whether in the phrase "all your acts are queens' " the punctuation of the First Folio (with the apostrophe at *queens*') should be retained, and urge its abolition on the ground that retention involves a "prosaic reduction of the meaning." This raises, and begs, at least two questions: how far, and on what authority, a critic is justified in discarding on grounds of personal preference the readings of a text pointed with unusual care, and more significantly, whether the distinction between *queens*' and *queens* could by any conceivable means be made intelligible in the theatre. Mr Bethell appears to suppose that the *Winter's Tale* was written for leisurely perusal in the study.

There is further rampant subjectivism in his discussion of Shakespeare's technique. "A dramatist (p. 54) . . . may express meanings of which he himself is only dimly aware . . . I do not know what Shakespeare deliberately intended in this play, no one can ever know, and the question is not important." (Much the same idea also on pp. 11, 12, 45, 53.) The present reviewer, in his innocence, has always supposed that the business of the literary critic was to employ his time, and such talents as he has been endowed with, in finding out.

His preoccupation with the effects of Leontes' jealousy upon his marriage has led Mr Bethell to overlook its disastrous effects upon his friendship. The omission is important, as it distorts the whole pattern of the play, so that Polixenes and all that he stands for are virtually ignored. Mr Bethell also ignores the simple formalism of Shakespeare's design, when (on p. 95) Florizel and Perdita are made to recapitulate Leontes and *Hermione*, or when (p. 102) "Mamillius is, as it were, renewed in *Florizel*" (my italics). Mr Bethell gains nothing by flouting intellectual coherence.

L. F. Casson.

King's College,
London.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Bible Guide Book. By Mary Entwistle. S.C.M. Press. 8s. 6d.

This book is a mine of information, particularly for the non-specialist who is called upon to teach in Day or Sunday School. It begins with a section on the Geography of Palestine, and then proceeds to deal in carefully planned sections with the social, agricultural, and religious life of the Jews in Biblical times. Much of the information has been gleaned at first hand, and the author claims that it is the fruit of her own experience gained through travel in Palestine. There is appended a time chart of the approximate dates of the books of the Old and New Testaments and a good bibliography. Of necessity in a book of this type the information has to be somewhat "potted," but it is none the less a scholarly work.

M. S. Dawson.

Altrincham.

The Faith that Abides. By F. P. Harton. Mowbray. 2nd edn. 5s.

Readers of Mr Harton's valuable *Elements of the Spiritual Life* must not expect to find here a solid contribution to the understanding of the Christian religion, but many devout souls whose faith is already full and satisfying will be grateful for much that he has written here. Many, too, whose knowledge of Christian doctrine is but slight—and there are more such among our congregations than we sometimes imagine—will be helped by his clear outline of the Christian faith.

R. D. M.

Orthodox Statements on Anglican Orders. Edited by E. R. Hardy, Jr., for the Advisory Council for the Presiding Bishop on Ecclesiastical Relations. Morehouse-Gorham Co., New York. Mowbray, London. $1.00.

This modest little volume is of great interest and importance. It should be in the hands of all who are interested in our relations with the Orthodox Church, and there are many such. William Palmer of Magdalen College, Oxford, more than a hundred years ago blazed a trail which has been followed by others. But Palmer's methods were peculiar to himself, individual and therefore unsuccessful. "It will lead to nothing, I fear, sir," said Dr Routh, the venerable president, to his friend, "for a separation there unhappily is; but it will show that there are some among us who wish it were otherwise." The matter now has come to be the concern of the Anglican Communion as a whole, and Dr Hardy's task is to show us how far we have got.

We have here, in this helpful volume, the Official Synodical Statements of Orthodox Churches on Anglican Orders in the order in which they were made—Constantinople 1922, Jerusalem 1923, Cyprus 1923, Alexandria 1930, Roumania 1936, Greece 1939—together with reports of conferences and discussions of considerable importance. We congratulate Dr Hardy on having been the first to bring together in so convenient a form this valuable collection of documents. He

warns us, as indeed the documents do themselves, that recognition of orders does not carry with it intercommunion. For that we must wait with patience; we must get to understand one another, we must learn and pray; for, in the words of Professor Komnenos, "full dogmatic agreement and union will of necessity require time."

The book surely is worthy of a cloth cover and an index!

OXFORD. R. D. MIDDLETON.

Think Again. By William James Hughes, Bishop of Barbados, with a Foreword by Henry Knox Sherrill, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. Morehouse-Gorham Co., New York. $2.00.

Here are twelve addresses marked by deep thought and spirituality, delivered mostly to congregations of men. Religion, the bishop insists, is the only remedy for the grave moral collapse from which the world now suffers. "What is wanted is more disciplined lives, and that can be brought about only through the grace of God"—the disciplined lives of clergy and laity, working together for a better world. There must be a clear understanding of the Christian faith and all that it implies. If the clergy are to be leaders they must be teachers rather than preachers, "and people seem ready" to listen. The position of the Anglican Church in these days of opportunity, the bishop is confident, is a strong one, which is occupied by few. It is not afraid of the truth. It has a profound respect for human liberty. It is rooted in Catholicism. It does not seek power. It only seeks to serve.

OXFORD. R. D. MIDDLETON.

The Religion of Sacrifice. By W. J. Sparrow Simpson. S.P.C.K. 2s.

This is a small book which neither has anything new to say nor says the old things in a new or particularly arresting way. The first three chapters, "How sacrifice began in eternity," "Sacrifice on earth in the religion of Israel," and "The sacrifice of the Incarnation," have some phrases which might stimulate the mind of a preacher. Dr Sparrow Simpson is, however, obscure when he says (p. 14), "we are to dwell on . . . how the Spirit of Sacrifice which arose in the inner life of the Deity was gradually matured in time." He can hardly mean an evolution in the nature of God, and yet it is difficult to see what else the words can convey. There is a lot about the Fall, but little recognition of the fact that God endowed man with His own self-sacrificial nature, which not even the Fall completely effaced. The writer is very much attached to the idea of development in Hebrew religion. But was not pre-Christian Israel *already* saved by the coming Son of Man, as Christian Israel is already raised to the heavenly places in Him? (Eph. ii, 6). The last three chapters—on the sacrifice of the cross, the high-priestly offering of our Lord in heaven, and the eucharistic sacrifice—are sadly marked by an implied separation of Christ from the Church. Irenæus is quoted with approbation, but it is a Cyprianic emphasis which Dr Simpson in fact adopts (*Shape of*

the Liturgy, pp. 113*ff.*). Incidentally, this failure to identify the sacrifice of Christ with the oblation-life of the Church seems to have the effect of making the idiom of the book unreal to a generation which is thinking more and more on the lines of world community as the solution of its problems.

J. C. S. Nias, O.G.S.

Blandford St Mary.

Sacraments in the New Testament. By P. W. Evans. The Tyndale Press. 2s. 6d.

Why are Infants Baptized? By H. S. Marshall. S.P.C.K. 9d.

The Principal of Spurgeon's College devotes the greater part of his booklet to an orderly summary of arguments in favour of the substantial authenticity of the baptismal command in Matthew xxviii. He then runs through the objections of Streeter, T. H. Robinson, J. V. Bartlett, and Cadoux. The pleadings of these critics are handled with all the respect that they deserve. A great many of the baptismal problems of current urgency are left untouched, and the lecture does not attempt a systematic presentation of doctrine, but it has a message much needing to be heard: "The justification of the observances of our faith on the ground of their æsthetic appeal, their apt symbolism, their age-long prestige, their pathetic associations, is a form of self-pleasing; in effect, it is a religion that finds its centre in the human. Firm ground is discovered when we resolve that whatsoever He saith unto us, we will do it"(p. 28).

Mr Marshall's essay is a short and not very Biblical dissertation on the *crux theologicum* of infant baptism. The author dwells principally on the psychological rather than the ontological aspect of regeneration. His doctrine of the body of Christ is predominantly utilitarian in content, and this is perhaps the cause of his occasional interjection of ontological ideas in places where they do not seem to fit. He quotes *Confirmation Today*, "Whoever is baptized is thereby transferred . . . and he becomes thereby a partaker of that New Life," and comments: "But does he? . . . The statement is pure theory: in flat contradiction to the facts as we know them" (p. 5). And yet later in his pamphlet he says: "*Are* baptized people as different from those who are not baptized as a frog is different from a tadpole? . . . Yes, even if you don't always notice it. The thing that has happened has happened to their very nature—and no one can see that, in our case" (p. 13). The pamphlet is written in the form of a string of rather tiresome conversational aphorisms and is not a careful piece of work.

Blandford St Mary. J. C. S. Nias, O.G.S.

Catherine; Saint of Siena. By Michael de la Bedoyere. Hollis and Carter. 12s. 6d.

Inspired partly by family tradition—the book is dedicated to the author's wife, Catherine, daughter of Algar Thorold the translator of St Catherine's *Dialogue*—Mr de la Bedoyere has produced a valuable

example of the new hagiography, a candid study of one of the strangest and most fascinating figures in the calendar. True to the modern tradition, he presents her, not as an aloof plaster figure gliding impeccably through an ecclesiastical legend, but as a complex and highly individual human being raised by grace above mediocre humanity, yet retaining in fullest measure the impress of nature and historical environment. He is not afraid to criticize either his heroine or her early biographers. With reservations in detail, he accepts the contention of Fawtier that Raymond of Capua and Caffarini, anxious, for the glory of the Dominican Order and the vindication of the Urbanist line of Popes, to obtain the canonization of a conventional saint, did not represent Catherine as she really was. Very rightly, then, he relies more upon the saint's own letters than upon what was written about her. But it is precisely this which makes more acute the other problem which the author does not burke. It is the same which Aldous Huxley raised and very unsatisfactorily answered in *Grey Eminence*. How are we to explain the combination in one person of deep communion with God and passionate support of semi-secular policies which historical retrospect suggests to have been mistaken and perhaps disastrous? Here we are shown, by copious quotations from her correspondence, the vehemence with which Catherine in her last years threw herself into a campaign for the return of the Papacy to Italy, the recovery of the Papal States, and the support of Urban VI against Clement VII. Though only a saint could thus have acted without self-corruption, one suspects in Catherine's fierce energy as much the drive of feminine temperament as the light and force of grace. Did she do harm or good? Perhaps the dilemma will not seem so stark to those who have studied the startling chapter in Poulain's *Grâces d'oraison* in which he catalogues the mistakes and errors of canonized saints and true mystics. Grace, even at its highest levels, is no substitute for natural prudence. Decidedly this is a book to be pondered by those inclined to easy pietism. There is a slip on p. 145, where Clement IV is written for Clement VI. Nor (p. 171) is there really much resemblance between the Florentine *ammonizione* and English elevation to the peerage. We could wish that the author had smoothed out some roughnesses of style here and there. And even a study of this length deserves an index.

THOMAS M. PARKER.

OXFORD.

The Source of Human Good. By H. N. Wieman. University of Chicago Press. C.U.P. 20s.

To read this book is to be reminded again that in U.S.A. Reinhold Niebuhr is a prophetic voice crying in a wilderness (or, more aptly, a jungle) of Liberal Protestantism gone to seed. For Dr Wieman (Professor of Christian theology) and his readers evidently share a *tradition* that orthodoxy is out of date, and that a grand amalgam of uplift, patriotic belief in American culture, and some sort of evolutionary and immanentist philosophy, expressed where possible in

Christian vocabulary, is the need of the age. The author's own amalgam has the merits of originality, consistency, and clarity. He is an avowed Naturalist. His God is non-personal Creativity, immanent in the multiple concrete reality of creative events, moving on in an absolute time towards greater achievements of value or "substantive quality." As history progresses the present good becomes relatively evil in resisting the future good, which is always in conflict anyhow with an independent force of evil (Crucifixion and Resurrection). When man enters this conflict with understanding (Christianity) he becomes involved in tragedy, the victory of good at the cost of good. If he has committed himself to Creativity (thus being in Christ, p. 269), his death (like that of Jesus, who did not rise again, p. 44) will shed a "sunset glow" of supreme value, constitutive of the triumph of history.

The author reiterates throughout that the present times are critical. The Hiroshima bomb is more decisive than the star over Bethlehem (p. 37). We *must* commit ourselves absolutely to Creativity (*passim*); we *must* have free industry (pp. 249-57); we *must* spread American culture (p. 43), and integrate it with supertechnology (pp. 151, 307, etc.). And so forth.

Non tali auxilio.

Basil S. Moss.

Scholæ Cancellarii,
Lincoln.

The Story of St Aidan's College, Birkenhead, 1847-1947. By F. H. Heiser. Phillipson and Golder, Chester. N.p.

John Bunyan: The Pilgrim's Progress. Illustrated by Clarke Hutton, and with an introduction by Hugh Martin. S.C.M. Press. 12s. 6d.

The present Principal of St Aidan's College, Birkenhead, in his centenary history has written a book which will be welcomed not only (though chiefly) by old members of that foundation, but by all students of English church history, whose interest in the development of theological colleges will be both stimulated and informed by its perusal. A great deal of the information is biographical; but the volume is a useful contribution to the history of the Church of England, and particularly to that of the Evangelical school of churchmanship. The reader will wish the college prosperity during the second century of its history on which it has just embarked.

It is no credit to this country that Bunyan's masterpiece has been so difficult to obtain in recent years (the present reviewer bought a copy last summer on the Continent); and the S.C.M. Press is to be congratulated on its enterprise and success in producing this edition. The text of Bunyan is clearly and attractively printed, the illustrations are apt, and Dr Hugh Martin contributes a short biographical introduction. With so handsome an edition ready to hand, no English Christian should fail to re-read (or perhaps even to read) one of the classics of devotional literature.

N. S.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment)

BIRMINGHAM BROADSHEETS: No. 1, *The True Work of the Church* (2d.).

BLACKFRIARS PUBLICATIONS: St Augustine, *Like as the Hart* (1s. 6d.).

CANTERBURY PRESS: Bishop Stephen Neill and others, *The Ministry of the Church* (2s.).

CHURCH BOOK ROOM PRESS: A. W. Parsons, *John Newton*; C. S. Carter, *Richard Baxter* (9d. each); F. J. Barff, *A List of Anthems suitable for the Church's Year* (3d.); A. E. Reffold, *A Noble Army of Women* (1s.); W. Bryn Thomas, *Church of England Finance* (n.p.).

CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY (PHILADELPHIA): W. H. Stowe, *The Intellectual Revolution and the Anglican Communion* (25 cents).

CLOISTER PRESS (LOUISVILLE): R. S. Meadowcroft, *Postlude to Skepticism* ($2.50).

FABER AND FABER: Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, edited by Francis Noel Davey, *The Fourth Gospel*, new edn. (35s.).

FAITH PRESS: Patrick Cowley, *The Parish is the Passion* (1s. 6d.).

INDUSTRIAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: *Present Politics and the Future of Britain* (2s.).

CHR. KAISER (MUNICH): H. Vogel, *Lutherischreformiert, heute*; H. Diem, *Luthers Predigt in den zwei Reichen*; W. Andersen, *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer Abendmahlsgemeinschaft heute* (n.p.).

HOLLIS AND CARTER: Ernest Short (editor), *Post-war Church Building* (30s.).

KEGAN PAUL: E. W. F. Tomlin, *The Approach to Metaphysics* (12s. 6d.).

LIFESTREAM PUBLICATIONS: Otto Strasser, *Germany in a Disunited World*; N. St. Barbe Sladen, *Wake Up, Anglicans!* (1s. each).

LONGMANS: Dom Aelred Graham, *The Christ of Catholicism* (21s.).

LUTTERWORTH PRESS: C. H. Dodd, *Six Broadcast Talks* (1s. 3d.).

HEINRICH MAJER (BASEL): Oscar Cullmann, *Weihnachten in der alten Kirche* (Fr. 1.50).

MOWBRAYS: P. M. Barry, *A Present for the Vicar* (2nd edition) (3s.); S. P. T. Prideaux, *The Making of Sermons* (3s. 6d.).

O.U.P.: E. F. Jacob (editor), *The Register of Henry Chichele, Vol. IV* (21s.).

PATHFINDER PRESS: *World Christian Digest, Winter*, 1947 (1s.).

PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS BOARD: J. McLeod Campbell, *Lambeth Calls* (3s. 6d.); Mabel C. Warburton, *The Mind and Ways of Islam* (2s. 6d.).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PRESS: A. C. Toyne, *The Journey of Faith* (6s.); R. W. Thomson, 1. *How Christianity Spread in England*, 2. *How Christianity Came to England*, 3. *How Christianity Grew in England* (n.p.).

S.C.M. PRESS: Florence Higham, *Frederick Denison Maurice* (6s.); Alan Richardson, *Christian Apologetics* (10s. 6d.).

SEABURY-WESTERN SEMINARY (EVANSTON, ILLINOIS): Joachim Wach, *Church, Denomination and Sect;* Cuthbert A. Simpson, *Jeremiah: the Prophet of "My People"* (25 cents each).

S.P.C.K.: J. Jocz, *The Jews in the Bible* (2s.); A. L. Maycock, *The Story of Little Gidding* (4d.); H. Hensley Henson, *Coming of Age* (3d.); The Archbishop of Canterbury, *The Beliefs of the Church of England* (2d.); A. E. J. Rawlinson and Charles Smyth, *The Genius of the Church of England* (2s. 6d.); W. K. Lowther Clarke, *Job and his Friends* (4d.); G. Parrinder, *Devotions to the Passion* (4d.); H. Godefroy, *Some Old Testament Stories Explained* (6d.); V. A. Demant (editor), *Our Culture* (5s.); C. R. Forder, *The Parish Priest at Work* (12s. 6d.); S. C. Hughson, *With Christ in God* (15s.).

S.P.C.K. AND NATIONAL SOCIETY: Aileen Henderson, *The Distance* (2s.).

TYNDALE PRESS: F. F. Bruce, *The Hittites and the Old Testament;* A. M. Stibbs, *The Meaning of the Word "Blood" in Scripture* (2s. 6d. each); J. Reginald Hill, *A Nation on Trial* (1s.).

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES STUDY DEPARTMENT: *From the Bible to the Modern World: Two Conference Reports* (3s. 6d.).

Printed in Great Britain by
Billing and Sons Ltd., Guildford and Esher